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HOW THE NEW AGRICULTURE AFFECTS THE FARM HOME.

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A radio talk by Mrs. Kathryn Van Aken Burns, Illinois State Home Demonstration Leader, delivered in the Land Grant College-National Farm and Home Hour, Wednesday, December 20, 1933, by a network of 43 associate NBC radio stations.

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Recently the Illinois Home Economics Extension Service has been holding clothing clinics all over the state. Farm women bring their old garments to the clinics to secure help and suggestions about incorporating present style trends in their remodeling. During the period of ripping seams or getting the garment apart, the women usually find some time to visit. Not long ago during one of these periods two alert farm women were discussing the new deal. Mrs. H. was heard to say, "Well I can't see that this new deal for agriculture has had any effect as yet in our home."

"Nor I either," replied Mrs. R., "tho John says we'll get a check most any day for wheat reduction."

"Yes, I suppose we'll get one too" answered Mrs. H. "It'll be welcome too! I've hardly seen any cash for two years."

"Neither have I," returned Mrs. R. "When I added up my home accounts this year, I found our actual cash income was only half of what it was two years ago."

"I'm glad I kept an account book," said Mrs. H. "At first I thought it would be discouraging, but really it's given me courage to hold up my head with pride.. We spent less than \$100 for clothing for the four of us last year and neither John nor Mary were shabby at High School. Goodness knows I worked hard enough about it."

As Mrs. R. finished ripping a long seam, she stopped for a moment and said: "This year I was determined to see if I could cut the \$233 we paid for food purchased last year. I did, too, and we didn't starve. In fact, we lived better than we ever have before and I only spent \$146. For the first time in his life my husband is really interested in the garden. It was an eye-opener to him when he saw that the garden was worth more than his crop of oats. We grew almost everything we ate except sugar and coffee and that sort of thing."

At this particular moment the clothing clinic proceeded more formally and I heard no more of the conversation between Mrs. R. and Mrs. H. However, it set me thinking about farm women and the new agriculture. While they are not signing contracts with the Government or entering into formal agreement with anyone, they are playing an active part in making the new agriculture. They have adjusted family expenses to a lowered cash income with the least possible pain to the family members by making the farm home more sufficient for the needs of the family. They have put their brains to work so that the necessities of life -- food, clothing and shelter may be provided with the smallest possible cash outlay.

Some farm homes in Illinois produced over two-thirds of their food supply last year. However, the farm home that produces two-thirds of its own food supply is the exception, not the rule. With land being removed from the cultivation of farm crops is there not even greater opportunity to utilize at least part of it to

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produce more of the family living? Last year the retail value of the farm produced food equalled \$330 per family. Some farm crops that did not produce that great a return are considered successful.

Events of the present year make me feel that in the new agriculture, women are determined that their homes shall be more attractive. I must confess surprise in the time of depression to find that farm women are so insistent for help in fixing up their homes. A group of women explained it to me this way: "You see now that there is less money for the movies and for gasoline, our children are spending more time at home. We want our homes to be as attractive as possible so they won't miss outside things so much. We are willing to spend lots of time and energy if you will show us how we can do it without spending much money."

As a result, these women are remodeling, redecorating, reupholstering, refinishing furniture, recaning chairs, and repainting walls, floors and woodwork as well as dyeing and redyeing fabrics. The past generation purchased its improvements pretty largely. Farm women today are learning to improve the standard of living through their own efforts rather than through purchase.

The new agriculture seems to find an enlarged family circle. Grown sons and daughters crowded out of urban positions are at home again. More home interests are being developed and there is an evident desire for more social contacts. Small social affairs are again prevalent in rural groups. Rural communities are developing their own recreation programs. Forums, drama tournaments, orchestras, choruses and play days are not uncommon in rural communities. In fact, there is a distinct tendency to secure social needs where economic needs are centered.

Through a live-at-home program which has tended to make the farm home a more self-sufficient unit, the farm woman has helped the farm family weather the economic storm. Through it all she has tried to make the rural home a more satisfying refuge and the rural community a more pleasant place in which to live. Today she feels that her ingenuity has been drained. She can't think of a resource she has not tapped. Now hope springs eternal that the new agriculture will provide more of the things man lives by except bread alone.

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